



via pacis

Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community



THE SOLDIERS OF THE GOVERNOR

Eric Gill's opening page to the Four Gospels

Lenten Focus - Farewell to Four Dear Friends page 1
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These past few months the DMCW community lost four dear friends: two guests and two friends of the extended national Catholic Worker / Peace & Justice tribe. We begin our Lenten issue of *via pacis* with tributes to each.



Kenneth M. Kubby May He Rest in Peace

By Fr. Frank Cordaro

"A Des Moines man was charged with murder Monday after a roommate was found dead in a boarding house for people with mental or behavioral problems." *Des Moines Register*, December 19, 2000.

News of Kenneth Kubby's violent death at the hand of one of his housemates hit our DMCW community like a lead balloon. Kenneth Kubby was one of our beloved regular guests, one of a number of mentally and physically handicapped people who frequent our house.

Kubby, as he was known to us, was 33 years old. A bit of an exotic dresser, Kubby always wore a hat and bandana, with lots of jewelry. He almost always had a cigarette hanging from his lip. And when he ran out of cigarettes and couldn't beg any more, he would collect the cigarette butts out of our ashtrays and construct his next smoke from leftover butts. He liked to keep his shirts and jackets half way unbuttoned to expose his chest hair, a habit he would practice regardless of the weather. He would dutifully button up when asked to.

He was so clothes conscious that one day when it was bitterly cold, he came into the house without a hat or scarf. I tried to fit him with one of the many winter hats and scarves that we had in stock. Despite the wide selection, none of them suited Kubby's taste - he would just as soon go without than wear a hat or scarf that didn't meet his personal clothing standards.

Kubby had a three-cup coffee limit at our house. Experience had taught us that if we let him drink more than three cups, he'd get so wired that he would find himself in trouble with our other guests. Sometimes, when something was wrong with Kubby's meds, it would not matter if he had any coffee or not, his behavior would be so disruptive that we had to ask him to leave for a day or two until he got his meds straightened out.

He wasn't a mean or violent person, even when his meds were off. In fact, most of the time Kubby was a delight to be around. He had genuine care for the well being of others. He would just get so caught up in himself and the daily struggle with the demons within, he would not be aware that his behavior was out of hand.

One time when Kubby's meds were beginning to show signs of not working, he became fixated on the crucifix in the Dingman House dining room. He walked from one side of the room to the other, intently looking at the crucifix, mumbling something to himself. This, in itself, was no big deal. We were used to such behavior from Kubby. It's when he went up to the crucifix and took the corpus off



Robert Talty Farewell to a Friend

By Mark Timberlake

Robert Talty, a long time guest and friend of the DMCW, passed away January 15th at the age of 58 from problems associated with a brain hemorrhage. He leaves behind a daughter, Rembrandt, various other family members, and a group of extremely grateful friends in our community to whom he had extended kindness and warmth in times of hardship.

The sacrifices and virtues of those less fortunate in our society rarely receive public commendation and recognition. But it will not be so for Robert Talty, for we in the DMCW have reserved a place in our hearts for him and dedicate this vignette to his memory.

Robert Talty was a remarkable individual. He often found ways of reaching out beyond the purview of his own vicissitudes to extend a helping hand to others, even to the extent of sacrificing his own means. Though Robert suffered from a heart ailment and diabetes, he never saw his condition as an obstacle to involving himself in the community and the lives of those in need. He offered encouragement and support to others suffering from diabetes.

I met Robert a year ago. I was also a guest of the community. At the time, Robert was assisting a mentally handicapped mother of three with many of the duties involving family life that people of normal capacity often take for granted. He took on a myriad of responsibilities from taking the children to school, to assisting the mother in applying for public and social assistance. He often spent his entire day aiding the family in matters others would not feel comfortable being involved in.

Robert was especially fond of children. Estranged from his own child by the ups and downs of a life hard lived and issues now beyond his control, Robert took on a positive role in the lives of the children here at the DMCW. He was especially skilled at influencing the children's consumption of vegetables. Teshaiya "Shay" McDonald, Carla and Jackie's 5 year old great niece and a resident of the Lazarus House, often called the Dingman House before the 6 PM evening meal to verify Robert's presence as the two were very close and were dinner buddies.

Robert was always sacrificing of himself, helping others, and seeking ways of improving his character. And for those reasons, he will always be remembered by each and every one of the lives he touched. We here within the DMCW would like to express our grief at the loss of our friend and our condolences to the family and friends of Robert Talty.

Kenneth M. Kubby

Continued

the cross and proclaimed, "There, Christ, you're free!" that we had to intervene. We had to ask Kubby to leave that day. His behavior was inappropriate. At the same time, we had to admire Kubby's intentions to stop the suffering of the crucified Christ.

We will miss Kubby's smiling face, good-natured spirit and odd ways. We take some comfort in the "Truth" that now Kubby is free of the suffering and torment he knew most of his life, and like the liberated corpus off the cross in the Dingman House dining room, we say, "Now Kubby, you're free."



Samuel H. Day, Jr. Faithful Resister

October 3, 1929 - January 26, 2001
by Tom Cordaro

Sam never thought much of organized religion, but he liked to be around people who took their faith seriously. As Sam would say, "I have faith in those with faith." A testament to his impact upon the faith-based peace and justice movement was on display at his memorial service on February 3rd in Madison. There were members of various Catholic Worker communities (including the Des Moines Worker Community), Plowshare activists, Faith & Resistance community members and many others.

Sam was probably best known for when he was editor of the *Progressive Magazine*, in an epic battle with the federal government to publish an article about how to build an atomic bomb from sources available in the public domain. Claiming the article was classified, the government acquired a prior restraint order against the magazine, but eventually the Supreme Court overturned the order and the article was published. The reason for publishing the article was to expose the myth of the nuclear secret which our government used to lull the country into a false sense of security regarding nuclear proliferation.

Later on in life Sam moved from writing about the nuclear threat to acting to stop it. At Nukewatch, with Bonnie Urfer, Sam exposed the practice of transporting nuclear weapons by truck across the country and through major urban areas. He disclosed the exact location of land-based nuclear missiles planted in cornfields and ranches throughout the Midwest. In both projects, Sam believed that it was the ignorance of the American people about the nuclearization of the nation that kept them from waking up to the dangers of the nuclear threat.

It was in the context of this work to expose the truth about the threat of nuclear war that many of us first met Sam Day. It was a natural for him to see the connection between his work and the work of faith-based resisters exposing the lies of places like Strategic Air Command who claimed, "Peace is Our Profession." In time he found himself crossing the line at nuclear facilities around the country.

Eventually he spent time in prison, where he suffered a stroke which made him legally blind. Sam took his blindness in stride, never letting it slow him down. Instead, he added to his long list of crusades, the struggle for the rights of the blind. Sam also took up the cause of Mordici Vanunu, the Israeli nuclear technician who exposed the open secret of the Israeli government's nuclear weapons program. After being kidnaped by Israeli agents while in Europe, Vanunu was sentenced to 18 years in solitary confinement. Up until the time of his death, Sam

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Chuck Trapkus

by Brian Terrell

Chuck Trapkus, Catholic Worker, artisan, Luddite, hospitalier to the homeless, songwriter, scholar, teacher, agitator, cartoonist, gardener, father and friend, died in an automobile accident on December 21, 2000.

I first met Chuck Trapkus some time before he and his wife, Kim, started the Dorothy Day House in Rock Island, Illinois, in 1983. Chuck would visit us a several times a year, bringing his sons, Isaac and Paul. I am grateful, now, that our children, Elijah and Clara, grew up with Chuck as mentor and friend, and almost like brother and sister to Isaac and Paul. Chuck and the boys would arrive in a station wagon loaded with tools and games and projects and stay for several chaotic but fun and productive days.

There are things that Chuck made or fixed all around our house and bit of land, but most of Chuck's time during these visits was spent with the children, his, ours and the neighbors', swimming, flying kites, making puppets, playing homemade games or building a palace of a tree house. Often, it seemed, I didn't get a chance to talk with Chuck until after the kids were in bed and even then, Chuck would be drawing or carving something as we would talk into the night.

On one of these visits when it was discovered that a chess piece was missing, a rook to a set that was a gift to Betsy many years ago from her father. Chuck went out to the garage and nailed a pulley to the wall and with a length of clothes line and a scrap bit of board made a foot-powered lathe. In minutes, a piece of a broken broomstick was turned into a replacement for the missing rook, perfect in size and proportion, distinguishable from its mate only in that it was brand new. The lathe was dismantled and the tools put away.

The most remarkable thing about this is that for Chuck this was not remarkable at all. Nor would Chuck ever accept or admit that he had any special talent or ability beyond that of anyone else. "The artist is not a special kind of person," he would often quote Eric Gill, "but each person is a special kind of artist." As exasperating as this humility might be to those of us, many who cannot do so many things so well and so gracefully, it was grounded in Chuck's conviction that everyone can and should have meaningful and creative work, that there is no need for sweatshops, prisons, casinos, silicon valley, porn industry, agribusiness or army, that each person can contribute something useful and beautiful to the world through her or his labor, if only we would realize that.

On the day after Christmas, Chuck was waked in the living room of the hospitality house that he helped to found so many years ago. Dorothy Day House was not only where he lived and gave a welcome to the homeless and unwanted, it was also Chuck's workshop. He was laid out surrounded by his tools, by his photographs, drawings, woodwork, pots, candles and weavings. He was dressed in

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Editor's Box

by Fr. Frank Cordaro



About the cover: I got a note from jail from Susan van der Hijden last month. Susan is a Catholic Worker from Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She and Fr. Martin Newell, a Catholic priest from St. Margaret's parish in London England's East End, did the Jubilee Ploughshares (English spelling) 2000 Witness. In the early hours of last November 3rd, Susan and Fr Martin entered RAF Wittering in Cambridgeshire, England and attempted to disarm a convoy truck used to take nuclear warheads up to Faslan, Scotland for the English Trident submarine fleet stationed there. Armed with nothing more than ordinary household hammers and their own blood, Susan and Fr Martin enacted yet another Isaiahan "Beat your swords into plowshares" witness and are in jail awaiting trial.

I wrote Susan soon after her witness in jail, thanking her for the effort. The stationary I use to write my note had a copy of this issue of *via pacis* cover graphic by Eric Gill on it. I finally heard from Susan last month. She wrote, "Thank you for your last letter. I only just now, was allowed to see it, some of the pictures were deemed inappropriate, especially the "Soldiers of the Governor" graphic of Eric Gills. Strange isn't it? The officer said, "Yes, I know you are in here for a peace witness but someone may be offended by that drawing." I was a bit stunned by the officer's answer. I guess when you actually look at the graphic, it is offensive - truth often is! I guess not allowing it in prison is part of the bigger culture of denial surrounding war and its effects. What do you think?"

I think you are right, Susan. And that is why we are using as our cover graphic for this issue of *via pacis*. Susan and Fr. Martin are still locked up awaiting trial in London. Letters of support and encouragement are welcome. You may write to Susan and Fr. Martin at Jubilee Ploughshares 2000; c/o 38, Twinflower, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, MK7-7LH, England.

Lenten Theme / Passion and Death: We got word of Ivo Dyer's death just as this issue of *via pacis* was being laid out. Ivo and his wife Jane are from the United Church Christ Church in Indianapolis, IA. "They have been coming to serve a meal at our house once a month," Carla said, "since before I moved into the community!" That means better than 11 years. Ivo and Jane are also the folks responsible for getting their church to donate a sweatshirt for each DMCW community member every Christmas. A tradition that goes back at least 11 years also. Ivo and Jane just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this year. They worked as a team and they always had smiles on their faces, as they helped serve the meals they and their church brought. Our prayers go out to Jane and her family. News of Ivo's death is another hard reminder of what the Lenten season and this issue of *via pacis* is all about: the Passion and Death of Jesus.

Through out this issue you'll find a mark of Christ's passion and death in the people and events it covers. You should also see strong glimmers of Jesus' Easter Hope and Faith in the very same people and events it covers.

TAX DAY PROTEST

Monday, April 16, Tax Day Protest at the Main Post Office, 2nd and University, Des Moines. Vigil and flyering at 5 PM with a focus on the Ballistic Missile Defense System. People are also invited to take shifts throughout the evening to flyer. For more information, please contact Patti McKee at Iowa Peace Network 515-255-7114.

Bishop Maurice J. Dingman

Peace Award Dinner

The sixth annual Bishop Dingman Peace Award Dinner will be held on Saturday, April 21, 2001, at Holy Trinity Church, 2926 Beaver Ave., Des Moines, IA. Sister Joan Chittister, OCSB, will be the speaker at the event and Rev. Gil Dawes will be the recipient of the award. Suggested donation for tickets is \$30.

For ticket information, contact Catholic Peace Ministry, 4211 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA, 50312, 515-255-8114.



Sam Day

Continued from p 1

waged an international campaign to get him released.

One of the things that struck me as I listened to the testimonials during his memorial service, was how each person pointed out that Sam had the ability to make them feel they were the center of attention. I was struck by this because I thought I was the only one who felt this way about Sam. You see, that was what was so special about Sam, no matter who he was with, he made you feel special and important.

I learned to love Sam Day because he took me seriously. Because of this, I found that I could never say no to him. He would call and ask me to drop everything, and go out in the middle of the Texas wilderness to sit in a ditch 24-hours a day for a week to watch for trucks carrying nuclear weapons, and I would go! He would ask me to live for a week inside a car out in Wyoming to monitor the deployment of MX Missiles, and I would go!

When I was told he had died, I felt as if a part of me had been cut away. How foolish I had been to not keep in closer contact with him. In his memoir, *Crossing the Line*, Sam wrote, "I remain an old coddler for peace, ready to continue my resistance and to recruit others to the cause. There is more work for me to do, whatever the risk and whatever the pain. I want to continue to speak truth to power—as an editor, activist and inmate—and to help others undertake that high calling." Sam Day, 74 years young, a faithful resister, rest in peace.

Chuck Trapkus

Continued from p 1

linen that he cultivated from the flaxseed, spun on a wheel and wove on a loom, all with tools made by his hand. Dorothy Day often quoted someone who said, "Work is love made visible," and those of us who gathered in his home to mourn Chuck's death found comfort in the evidence of his love surrounding us.

On a beautiful, but desecrated, island in the Mississippi, a short walk from where Chuck lived, is the Rock Island Arsenal. Back when I lived in the neighborhood, the arsenal was the area's largest employer, as well as the largest weapons factory in the world, fueling wars of the day in Central and South America, in Southern Africa and the Middle East, preparing the tools for a final nuclear conflagration. If the Dorothy Day House represents work as love made visible and labor put to the service of others, then the Rock Island Arsenal represents its antithesis: a perversion that God never intended; work as hatred and fear made visible, labor put to the murder and domination of others. Chuck was a local and the employees of the arsenal were friends, neighbors and classmates. His consistent resistance, unauthorized prayer, blockades, and trespasses there were acts of love, too, for those employees as well as those threatened by the arsenal's weapons.

After the funeral Mass, about 30 of Chuck's friends entered the arsenal to pray for peace and the guards there who arrested us recognized Chuck's love and expressed to us their condolences and their own grieving.

Many of his friends had the bittersweet experience of hearing from Chuck one last time after we heard of his death. Each year Chuck made Christmas cards, woodblock prints in four colors, on stock he made from shredded newspaper and dryer lint. Apparently, he had put a batch of these

in the mail just before his accident. This year's card featured an image of his mother, her head thrown back in prayer over her dead child she held in her arms as stealth bomber Santa Claus ("Ho Ho- nothing Iraq") fly over her burning house. "Peace," was the message in letters on Chuck's card, "Peace, crying out loud!" This was Chuck's incessant prayer and his last gift to us, "Peace- for crying out loud!"

Richman's Ghetto

by Abigail Frank

a hidden jungle
identical white houses with
freshly shaven lawns and
perfectly engineered concrete
streets
revealing no blemishes of
humanity.
a quicksand pit
in the heart of the manicured
housewife
a murder is being committed
in the eyes of a studious lawyer
lurks a lost man:
the weapons are different:
instead of brass knuckles
there are jeweled rings:
in place of gang attire
is a starched business suit:
but curled up noses
are as powerful as any clenched
fist.
stripping away confidence
pummeling dignity
and forcing heads to lull
downcast in red shame:
it's the most dangerous ghetto
because
no one speaks of it:
there is no support group for
victims of this ghetto:
only clothes and credit cards
to fill the void:
and still the void stretches
to become a boundless expanse
of lonely misery:
the white mask of perfection
conceals a green mask of greed:
faces are painted
and plucked to hide the robotic
creature
molded by money and wealth:
hamsters in glass cages spinning
aimlessly
on shiny plastic wheels:
this is the richman's ghetto.

by Carla
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via pacis

Des Moines Catholic Worker Community Newsletter
PO Box 4551
Des Moines IA 50306

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The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Serman on the Mount. In the spirit of the Catholic Worker tradition, we are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening our home for those in need of food, clothing, bedding, a shower, or a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that foster social justice.

Bishop Dingman House

1310 7th St.
(515) 243-0765

Community members:
Frank Cordaro
Richard Flamer
Jerry Dermody
Mike Thompson
Mark "Tim" Timberlake

Mrs. Liggett House

1301 8th St.
(515) 282-0583

Community members:
Mike & Fran Fuller
Jerry Ebner

Azarias House

1317 8th St.
(515) 246-1499

Community members:
Ed Bloemer
The Dawson-Nearns family: Carla,
Richard, Julius, Joshua & Jordan
Jackie Robinson
Teshaiya McDonald
Irving Schroeder

Community Garden

1307 8th St.
(515) 283-0025

Garden Coordinators:
Meredith Bruns
Erick Davidson



Friday, April 14, 2000

7:30 p.m.

Dingman House

1310 7th St.

Celebrate the Eucharist and spend time with friends.

Community NEWS



Sr. Chloe and Carla

BMEW photo

by Carla Dawson-Ngamo

Hello! The time has passed so quickly since I last sat down and wrote my article. I hope everyone is surviving the ice and snow. This has been an extremely cold and wet winter and I pray that everyone is keeping warm. These past few days have been a true blessing. It's so nice to see children outside enjoying the sun.

Well, on to our community happenings. We have two new community members. Mark "Tim" Timberlake is a young man who lived in a house behind us a year ago. He recently wrote to ask us if he could join us in our works.

He is a student at Des Moines Area Community College. He is pitching in nicely. If you see him around, say "Hi".

Jerry Ebner is our other new community member, moving here from South Dakota. He has been very helpful in taking over the food run since Mike Thompson's back surgery. He has also been taking shifts at the house and is currently applying to local colleges.

Fr. Frank has been assigned to All Saints parish in Stuart, IA and is gone a good part of the week. He has been keeping up with the bathrooms and they look marvel-

ous. Visiting his mother and hanging out with his cousin when he gets a chance take up any spare time. He has not been getting to the YMCA as much as he would like, but with all the ice chopping, he stays pretty healthy.

Mike Thompson had to have back surgery in February. He came through it okay. He is not back to 100% but is taking shifts at the house. He could sure use a few extra prayers.

Fran and Mike Fuller are a great asset to our community. They are fitting into the community, which isn't as easy as it seems. Fran always has a kind word or a smile that puts people at ease. Mike is a gentle giant. Just by his mere presence he keeps the house calm.

Eddie has been working hard as always. He is planning to visit his mom during Holy Week, a trip he looks forward to every year. He is also planning to be a part of the Chiapas delegation. Eddie has been visiting friends who are in the hospital and homebound. He has a true gift to animals and ill people. He is our own St. Francis.

The hard winter has made it tough for two of our community members (Jerry and Irv) to pursue their can-collecting activities. Jerry Dermody is 72 and gets his exercise canning as much as possible. Irv has also been a tremendous help with the community laundry.

If you didn't know, Richard Flamer and Sister Chloe are back in Chiapas. We miss them both

very much and hope and pray that they're doing well. Greg Fath and Mark Kenney went along with Richard to help out. Mark Kenney returned to Omaha when we was indicted for the Feast of Holy Innocents action last December. (See the details on page 7.)

My sister, Jackie, who wrote such a beautiful article in the last *via pacis*, is busy with her new granddaughter who we are blessed to see on the weekends. Jackie is a special help to me. She does a lot of my family things that I am not able to do because of school. She is a wonderful sister and a great friend.

Teshaiya McDonald, our little imp, is doing very well at school. She is reading little books. Teshaiya will be going to live with her mother this month. She will be greatly missed by all at the house since she has touched everyone's life with a ray of sunshine.

My three sons are doing great. Julius had an excellent season on the varsity basketball team at East High. He is keeping up his grades. We have been very busy getting ready for his first ACT test.

Joshua has been having a nice semester after a rough start to Middle School. I think the change was really hard, but he has looking into his self and realized he is a nice person, who doesn't need to be someone he is not. We are glad he has turned the corner.

Jordan is on the honor roll. He

did very well on his TAG science test. His teacher told me he is the kindest and most thoughtful boy she has ever met. He is always thinking about others' feelings. I would have to say at this moment that I am very proud of how my boys are doing. It is not easy or without hills and valleys to raise three sons.

I am feeling deeply blessed not only because of my sons, but because of the blessing of being alive. We have been through some lean times what with all the high utility bills, and the depression we have seen in people because of the lack of sun, but we know with God's blessing, we will get through it.

We have been blessed with an anonymous donation to repair Lazarus House. Lazarus House now has new siding and new windows and gutters. We would like to send our thanks to the person or persons who have so generously given to us.

We have been seeing a lot of people who hadn't previously been coming. To the old and new supports, we would like to send our thanks. We know it takes everyone doing what they do to live out God's plan. We are feeling everyone's prayers and are grateful. Please keep them up. May you feel God in your life and do your part.

God bless,

Carla

Norman's Whereabouts

by Norman Searah

I'm at a loss for words for this article dealing with death and the people I know who have died recently. I've known Chuck Trapkus and Sam Day for a long time, and I've had the pleasure of listening to them at Sugar Creek and other retreats. Also Charles River, a long time neighbor, died recently. I used to trim his grass and deliver food to him and his wife. Also just recently, Robert Talty and Kubby died. They also became friends to the Catholic Worker.

Death has also touched my heart, others would say, it hit home where the heart is. I'm from a large family of twelve, six sisters and six brothers. My mother's still living in the same house where many of my brothers and sisters were born and raised. My father died in 1981 and just this past October, my sister, Andrea, died. It hurts a lot and I often pray for answers wishing that I could do something. But, what?

There's a plaque that hangs near my door in my room that reads like this:

The clock of life is wound but once... And no man has the power... To tell just when the hand will stop... At late or early hour... Now is the only time you own... Live, Love... Toil, with a will... Place no faith in tomorrow... The clock may then be still...

My first experience with death

was when I was a teenager. My mother had a child die at birth. I forget whether it was a boy or a girl. I recall that we were all sad. I often think about what type of person he or she would be today and recall that there are other mothers that give birth to still-borns. When I got a little older, I worked at the town cemetery trimming around the gravestones, flower pots and trees and mowing the grass. Caring for the cemetery

was a good job until I found myself alone and didn't have a driver's license and drove the cemetery truck to town for gas. I ended up getting fired on April Fool's Day. I buried a few people that I knew and prayed for the best for them.

I have this thing about friendship. If I break up with a friend, in some ways we're still friends. I've got a friend who is serving time in Mitchellville Correctional Center for Women. Her mother was dying and the state refused to let her travel to Springfield, Missouri, to see her while she

was still alive. When her mother died, the state refused to let her go to her mother's funeral. So I told her that I would go for her. With the help from a few people giving me money for the trip and the help from the Catholic Worker and Mike Sprong, we drove to

Bolivar, Missouri, for her mother's wake. We then checked into a motel and went to her mother's funeral. I brought back some things from her mother's funeral for her. My friend

was sad when I told her about the trip and the funeral. When Sheryl's mother died, women in Mitchellville were still allowed to hug visitors and she needed one.

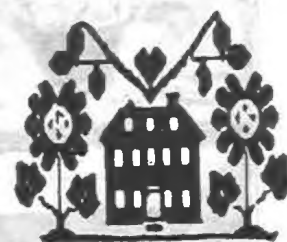
I could go on talking about other funerals, but would rather talk about that something that happens after a person dies. I'm no expert on where the soul of a person truly goes after death. Death of loved one, a friend, or even a stranger is sad and it hurts. I believe that there is a God who'll decide where to send souls after death. It is good to say to people that when I die that I'll be going

to heaven because I've been good. Yet if I do something bad, I just might be going to hell. I'm the one who decides to be either good or bad, not God. Both God, Jesus and the devil know it and they know me more than I know myself.

But anyway, I would like you to know that I'm still working on my diabetes. Like cancer, it's a killer. I get my blood sugar, weight, and blood pressure checked often. I take my medication daily. I don't take shots yet.

I'm no longer washing dishes at Principal after going through a difficult time with a supervisor. I decided that my health and my sanity were more important so I quit and now I'm stocking shelves at Family Dollar. Also I drive a church van for Trinity United Methodist Church. I take people once a month to Oakdale and Anamosa to visit their loved ones in prison. I also take people to prisons in Fort Madison and Mount Pleasant.

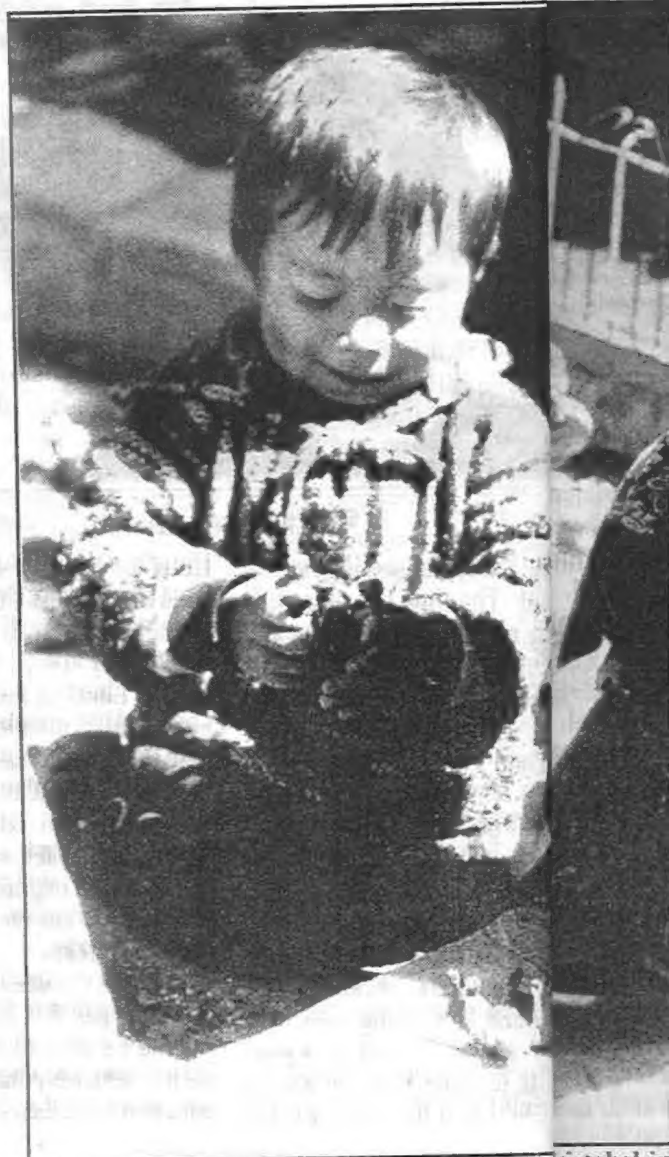
I've decided that since I didn't get any kind of reply for donations to take to South Dakota for Native Americans that I would say thank you and let people know that I'll try again some day and that I still care. Well, I thank you for your time.



DMCW
25th
Anniversary
Celebration
August 24 - 26

Calling all former and current Des Moines Catholic Workers and all of our friends and foes alike! August 23, 2001, marks the 25th anniversary of our community's existence. So clear your calendars and join us in Des Moines August 24-26 to celebrate this remarkable achievement. More details on the celebration in the next issue of the *via pacis*.

Chiapas and bymer



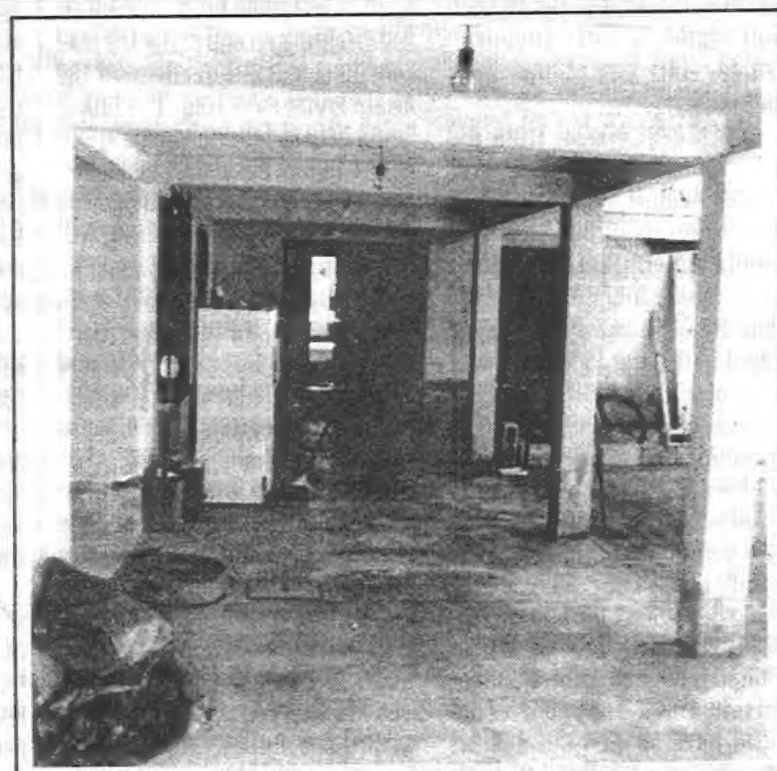
Today it's Santana...yesterday it was Pavarotti. Greg Fath is working on shelving. In the U.S., one goes to a Home Depot and grabs nails, pre-cut wood, and glue and comes back to assemble the product with a nail gun, table saw, etc. Down here in San Cristobal de las Casas, we don't have it so easy. But we do have a boom box, some modern tools, a good coffeepot, and a vehicle to transport materials.

This morning we started the day with the Scripture readings from Ecclesiastes and the Gospel of Mark that I had translated the day before from one of the Spanish Bibles we brought along with us. Mark Kenney had the only English Bible and when he returned to the U.S., I made him take it with him for his 4 to 5 day bus ride. After the readings, we had a discussion on our way to my favorite restaurant for breakfast. (Also, it's the only one open before 8 am.) After breakfast, we got to the Cultural Center (Syjac) by 7:30 am to start work.

I dropped Greg off to get everything opened up while I drove to a place that sells lumber. At the first place, Paco, the owner, told me they were all sold out of dry "tablas" or rough cut 1 by 12's. The second place had some dry stuff, but it was not of the best quality, so I had to pick through almost 60 boards to get the 4 that I needed. I also picked up some "polas" or poles for the scaffolding we were to build later in the day. After getting the tablas loaded and secured, I took them down the road to the "sepiadora's" (the guy with a four-edge planer who squares up and planes the boards). He ripped the "tablas" to the size

I needed and I to Greg to get st We hired an and concrete mas of Eugenio last w younger brother help him with a stuff such as pre for a roof over ing an enclosure the second floor floors, etc. When plumbing pipes the poured conc block walls. He two full tanks of figured out we So Eugenio had of the pipes, br concrete as he w pose the whole We found se and a pipe that middle of the p have a cap on a water for this an on every 3 days the tank useful of the city, they day for 9 hours section, we get every 3 days. Fernando, the made four trips hardware store got nails at one tings at four diff trical parts at Of course, I ar most of the pe chases are han side of their bic away. Along the v talking with storeowners, nity and about Catholic Wor Moines and w

as Fly and Report by Flamer



I took the started. "albanil (ason) by week. He er, Umb all the epping the the patio e for the or, repair n we got were ins crete flo However, f water be had majo to track eaking went along system.

Even major goes out atio and t. Since ea is only we had (In the r get wat Here in water for So w plumber to six of this mo place, co erent stor another st n in a ca ple mak ing pipe cles and ay, I ha the . about our wor r House y we are

San Cristobal in an exchange of "faith for construction." Astonishment is the usual response.

At a good restaurant downtown last week, we were trying to explain to the owners, two young Italian/Mexican women, why we were here and where we were working. When we told them we were working in "La Hormiga", they gasped. It is the home of 30,000 expelled Indians, but to them it was a source of great dismay. "Oh, it is so dangerous there..." Then later it was, "I hope they pay you well. Do you make enough money to have bodyguards?" Kind of reminded me of Des Moines and the Catholic Worker location at 7th and Indiana Streets.

Yet here our life is mostly with the poor. We shop at a little fruit stand down the street where I can keep up with the neighborhood gossip. The guy who planes our wood, Domingo, is on the committee of Habitat for Humanity which is housed at Syjac. He has informed all of his clients that there are two master carpenters at the Center with a mountain of tools who can do anything.

Rogelio is also on the committee and is the area's only electrician. He told me that after working in Mexico City for six years and here for two years, he has never seen light switches of the quality we brought with us.

We got to meet with three women and their children last week. Each of the women has at least one child and none of them have husbands. Two were abandoned and one is a widow at the age of 23. They came to the Center to find out about the day care center that is to open soon. It

seems they can make 200 pesos a month (about \$20 US dollars) if they could only find someone to watch their children while they work. The children, ages six months to three years, are all in various states of malnutrition.

A big part of the work down here is trying to make the space of the center usable. So, it looks like our next project is to build a kitchen for the day care center. The Canadian Embassy will be providing funds for two women to run the unit and money for food and vaccinations. We have already finished the rooms, which will be used for the care, but I guess we had better go buy some furniture, at least some chairs.

Mass at San Francisco Church on Sundays keeps us centered. Santana and Pavarotti keep my senses alive. Time is passing quickly, but I miss my housemates and the community of Fr. Frank, Carla, Jackie, Ed, Mike T., Tim, Mike and Fran, Irv, old man Jerry, et al.

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The DMCW is organizing a delegation to visit Richard Flamer and the Self Help Indian Center in San Cristobal, Chiapas, Mexico April 23 - May 1, 2001. While in San Cristobal, the delegation will have an opportunity to visit the SYJAC Center, be introduced to the work they do, and explore possible mission connections between Iowa and the Center. DMCW Ed Bloomer will be on this delegation.





URGENT APPEAL

April 7th Protest and Nonviolent Blockade Iowa Air National Guard Headquarters

"5th Tour of Duty for Air Guard in Persian Gulf. Combat aircraft from a Des Moines-based unit of the Iowa Air National Guard will return to the Persian Gulf region in early summer." Feb 23, 2001 Des Moines Register.

An urgent appeal from the Iowa Committee to End War Crimes against Iraq: We invite you to join us in our efforts to sound the alarm and bring attention to an ongoing war crimes activity by our Iowa Air National Guard. After the 1991 war with Iraq, the United States, England and France began enforcing "no-fly zones" over the northern and southern territories of Iraq.

These "no fly zones" have no legal standing in the international community. They have never been voted on by the United Nations. The majority of world opinion is against them. Political and religious leaders all over the world have spoken out against the continued bombing of Iraq. France has since ceased its participation in enforcing the no-fly zones.

Over the last two years, Iraq has been bombed almost daily with hundreds of civilian casualties. The Iowa Air National Guard's 132nd Fighter Wing, with its F-16 fighter planes, help enforce these no-fly zones on a regular rotation with other states' Air National Guard units.

In August of 1999, the Iowa Air National Guard F-16s fired on Iraqi targets destroying a mosque and injuring three civilians. Last March, the Iowa Committee to End War Crimes Against Iraq invited people to join them in a blockade of the main entrance of the Iowa Air Guard Headquarters at the Des Moines Airport. Twenty-two protesters were arrested; most spent the night in jail. Eleven of the arrested protesters were college students.

The Des Moines Register reports the Iowa Air National Guard's F-16s are returning to Iraq for the fifth time in early summer for another 30-day rotation. Help us sound the alarm and bring attention to Iowa's role in these ongoing war crimes against the people of Iraq.

Schedule of events:

April 6, Friday, 7:00 p.m. Public Forum. Steve Jacobs of the

Columbia Mo. Catholic Worker will share through word and song about his July 1998 visit to Iraq with a Voices in the Wilderness delegation and about his follow-up efforts to bring an end to the US lead sanctions and enforcement of the no fly zones over Iraq. The talk is being held at Trinity United Methodist Church, 8th and College, Des Moines, IA. It is free and open to the public. A free will offering will be taken.

April 7, Saturday, 9:00 a.m. Nonviolence training and final planning for Legal Protest and Blockade of the Iowa Air National Guard Headquarters and car caravan to protest site. Anyone considering risking arrest and participating in civil disobedience must attend the nonviolent training and final planning. This gathering and nonviolent training session will take place at Visitation Catholic Church, 1275 E. 9th St, Des Moines, IA.

April 7, Saturday, 12:00 p.m. Legal Protest and Nonviolent Blockade (an act of civil disobedience and an arrestable offense) of the Iowa Air National Guard Headquarters main gate at S.W. 31st St. & McKinley Ave., Des Moines, IA.

Anyone who plans to participate in the April 7th legal protest or do civil disobedience and join the blockade are asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

* Anyone considering participating in the blockade and risking arrest must attend the Non-violent Training and Planning Session April 7th. * Anyone joining the protest must adhere to the spirit of nonviolence at all times. Physical and verbal violence is not acceptable. All persons and property must be respected, especially the police and National Guard security people. No drugs or alcohol allowed. The Iowa Committee to End War Crimes against Iraq is a coalition of faith-based peace and justice groups and individuals who want to see the end of the U.S. war on the people of Iraq. We endorse an end to the sanctions and to the enforcement of the "No Fly Zones" in Iraq.

If you are interested in joining us on April 6th and 7th contact: The Iowa Committee Against War Crimes, c/o Fr. Frank Cordaro & DM Catholic Worker, PO Box 4551, Des Moines IA 50306. Phone 515-243-0765 or by email at frankcordaro@earthlink.net.

Sprong/Urfer Found Guilty



by Fran Fuller

On February 19, five people from the DMCW left for Madison, WI, to attend the Festival of Hope and subsequent trial of peace activists Michael Sprong and Bonnie Urfer. The five (Ed Bleemer, Jerry Ebner, Fr. Frank Cordaro, Mike and Fran Fuller) joined more than 100 people who gathered in support of the activists' efforts to shut down Project ELF which is a controversial nuclear submarine transmitter system.

The jury deliberated three hours following the two-day trial and found the defendants guilty of damaging property of the U.S. Navy. Sentencing will be held on May 4, and they face up to one year in prison and a \$100,000 fine.

Michael and Bonnie's efforts to shut down Project ELF span nearly twenty years apiece. They have both been involved in protests and demonstrations, writing petitions, lobbying their representatives to introduce bills to cut funding, line crossings, research, holding educational meetings. They chose to escalate their efforts, and on June 24, 2000, cut down three of the 4000 wooden poles that suspend the giant antenna wire, which is the starter pistol for nuclear war.

The cutting of three poles was just enough to bring the antenna wires to the ground and temporarily take the system off-line. A year's worth of research, study and prayer went into deciding on this course of action. Advice and counsel was sought from Attorney Anabel Dwyer, an adjunct professor of law at Cooley Law School in Lansing, MI. Attorney Dwyer testified as a witness for the defense in this trial and both Michael and Bonnie spoke in their own defense.

Based on Attorney Dwyer's counsel, Michael and Bonnie believe their action in cutting down the poles was lawful. We have the privilege and responsibility to take appropriate and reasonable action when a crime is being committed even if that crime is being committed by our own government. Since nuclear weapons do not meet the definition of a "weapon" according to International Law, military manuals, or the Nuremberg Laws, their use, or threatened use, is illegal.

The threat to fire Trident

weapons is as illegal as actually using them. There are laws that govern warfare, and these laws forbid contaminating the environment, killing innocent civilians, depriving people of their health and welfare, destroying culture, etc. Nuclear weapons do not discriminate. When the U.S. Government refuses to comply with warfare laws, citizens have a right and obligation to stop the illegal action.

In documents they stapled to the downed poles, Michael and Bonnie called their action "crime prevention", claiming the ELF system and Trident are outlawed terror weapons capable only of threatening aggression and mass destruction. Their goal was to disarm this weapon of mass destruction legally.

In a pre-trial gag order, Magistrate Stephen L. Crocker ruled "irrelevant and inadmissible" any and all testimony or evidence referring to Project Elf, Trident submarines, nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons policy, international law, the laws of war, or the U.S. Constitution (which explicitly elevates treaty law to a position superior to all federal statutes). The defendants had prepared to bring experts in humanitarian law and nuclear weapons to testify to the capability of the Trident submarine missile system and its status in law since the UN World Court ruled July 8, 1996, that the threatened use of nuclear weapons generally violates the law of nations.

The defendants were allowed to offer severely restricted testimony as part of a defense of "advice of counsel." The defense formally excuses actions that would otherwise be illegal, if the advice of an attorney convinced the defendants

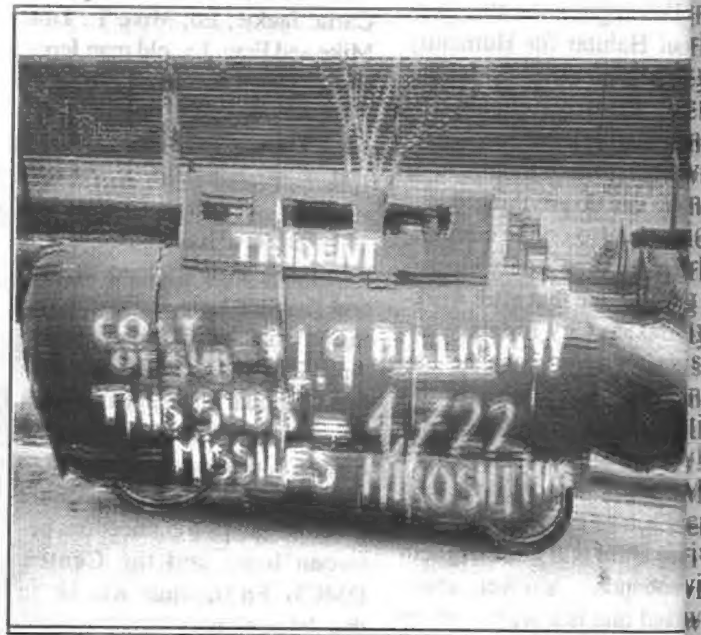
that their actions would be lawful. The federal damage defense requires proof that the defendant "knew that their actions were unlawful." This is the first time defense has been allowed.

Michael and Bonnie took steps to assure their actions were lawful. Three items were necessary: 1) seek advice of counsel; 2) the least amount of harm possible; and 3) insure no injury was inflicted on others. They sought advice of an expert attorney whose specialty is international law and nuclear weapons. They cut down only three poles, which was the minimum number required to shut the system down, and they even used a hand saw rather than a chain saw. They were in an isolated area, and made sure no person's safety was compromised.

Stopping annihilation of this planet is lawful. We believe every informed person would consider Michael and Bonnie's action at ELF lawful. They had an option to find themselves in a jail cell based on the defense of "advice of counsel" but chose not to.

In closing arguments, Attorney Love, Michael's attorney, stated the government's assault on property rights are the lessons we learn as children. He said, "Thou shall not kill; the earlier lesson learned and the more fundamental of humanity than respect for things."

"Some property has no moral right to exist. ELF is a good example of that." Attorney Dwyer. For more information, contact Nuke Watch at www.nukewatch.com.



DMCW photo

Resistance Notes



John Sullivan

"The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured." Gaudium et Spes, (81&3) Vatican II

Shame on the Archdiocese!

You can't raise money for the poor and feast at the SAC museum without blessing the bloody Cold War it represents, its weapons of mass destruction, and its evil intent to use them.

You also mock the poor we strive to serve. Des Moines Catholic Worker Community.

by Jerry Ebner

For the third year, the Omaha Archdiocese has held its annual Catholic Charities fund-raiser at the SAC Museum. After some reflection and prayer, Ed Bloomer, Fran Fuller and I decided it would be appropriate to have a presence at the event to express our concern over the Archdiocese' apparent blessing of all that the SAC Museum represents.

On March 10, we went to the Museum armed with leaflets (shown above) to raise the awareness of those attending this event. We began our activities by joining Mark Kenney on the shoulder of the highway leading to the SAC Museum entrance. Mark is a faithful witness at this site and Offutt AFB. We spent a couple of hours holding signs saying "Catholic Charities Boycott SAC Museum" and "Christians Study War No More".

When the museum closed and people began arriving for the evening festivities, I decided to take the leaflets and stand near a sign directing drivers to "General Parking". As cars approached, they would stop and roll down their windows assuming I was handing out parking information. I was glad to aid each driver by handing him or her our leaflet and said, "Good evening. General parking to the right. Valet parking to the left." Two hundred and fifty leaflets were handed out in this fashion. Needless to say, I handled my "parking attendant" duties with much enthusiasm and joy!

My duties were cut short, however, when two local police cars arrived. After about a ten-minute review of state law, we were allowed to continue to hold our signs but I was asked to discontinue handing out the leaflets. After the officers left, we discussed going inside the museum to con-

tinue our witness since it was time for the event to begin. Since we didn't have a \$120 ticket, I prayed, "Well, Holy Spirit, if you opened the Red Sea in ancient times for your people to pass through, please find a way to open a door for us if you want us to be faithful and speak." We drove down the service road behind the building and discovered a door that led to the kitchen area propped open with a rock. Inside were many workers busy with the meal so no one paid any attention.

Eddie and I entered and found the dining room. In clear view of the diners were all the military weapons, fighter plans and Army jeeps on display. We prayed that the Holy Spirit would show us the best time to read our statement to the crowd. The 1,000 or so dinner guests now took their seats at the tables and Archbishop Elden Curtiss began giving the blessing. He began by quoting Matthew 25 saying, "Lord, we remember when you said "When I was hungry, you gave me food. When I was naked, you gave me clothes..." I felt the Spirit move in me and decided the moment had arrived.

Eddie and I walked to the middle of the room and addressed the crowd saying "Brothers and sisters in Christ, we bring you a message from the Document of Vatican II" and I began reading. Two of the guests grabbed us both and held us until the security guards arrived. We were both roughly escorted out the front door and threatened with arrest if we returned. Since we felt we had been successful in our witness, we left with joyful hearts.

Please contact Catholic Charities, 330 N. 60th St., Omaha, NE, 68104, or email them at catholiccharities@comaha.org to let them know holding their fund-raiser at the SAC Museum is a scandal to the cross of Jesus and His message of peace and justice.



Line Crossers, Offutt Booking Room, Photo compliments of Offutt Security (L to R) Fr Jim Dubert, Catholic Priest, Dubuque, IA; Fr. Jim Murphy, Catholic Priest, Platteville, WI; Fran Fuller, Catholic Worker, Des Moines, IA; Fr. Jack McCaslin, Catholic Priest, Omaha, NE; Ed Bloomer, Catholic Worker & Veteran, Des Moines, IA; Mark Kenney, Cab Driver & Veteran, Omaha, NE

Feast of Holy Innocents Line Crossers' Statement December 28, 2000

"We stand here today on the Feast of Holy Innocents and are reminded of the Biblical story of children slaughtered at the command of political leaders of their day. Here at Offutt Air Force Base we stand before you, our brothers and sisters, and plead for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons. We are saddened that a new US political administration chooses to lead us into the folly of a Star Wars nuclear missile defense system and continued maintenance of our nuclear arsenal. These billions of dollars could be used to nurture children of the world. Instead, we only further risk another slaughter of innocent children and indeed all of humanity. The rest of the world sees the development of a missile defense as renewing the arms race. We will not be lulled into indifference toward the evil of weapons of mass destruction. We invite you, citizen soldiers, to join us this holiday season in honoring the Prince of Peace and the sanctity of life. "Herod killed the infants. StratCom would kill the world. Celebrate Christmas. Shut down StratCom."

UPDATE
Mark Kenney was arraigned on March 13th for crossing the line in the action listed above in violation of a previous ban and bar letter. He pleaded no contest and was sentenced to a six-month term. He was released and ordered to report to the US Marshall's office on Easter Monday, April 16, to begin serving his time.

In Mark's statement he quoted "The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured." from a Vatican II document and also read Scripture beginning at Matthew 5:21.

You can support Mark and his wife with letters of encouragement and cash donations to this address: Mark and Marie Kenney, 1915 So. 44th St., #314, Omaha, NE 68105.



(L to R) Ed Bloomer, Fr. Frank Cordaro, Bill Basinger, Rita Hohenshell, Fran DMCW photo Fuller, Helen Oster, Richard Flamer, Jean Basinger, Jerry Ebner, Brian Terrell

January 12th Camp Dodge Walk On and Inform Affinity Group

On January 12, 2001, nine Des Moines Area Peace Activists walked onto Camp Dodge at 7:00 a.m. to deliver an urgent message to the Iowa Army National Guard's Company C, 1st Battalion 168th Infantry in their barracks. The Company was heading for Southwest Asia to support U.S. Forces that are enforcing the Iraqi "No-Fly Zones". In their leaflet, the activists declared the "Establishment and enforcement of the "No-Fly Zones" over Iraq are illegal, unilateral acts of war committed by the United States and Great Britain without international support or United Nations authorization." The leaflet also informed guard members of their legal and moral obligations under international and domestic law. Individual guard members were urged to do the right, moral and legal thing and refuse to participate in the upcoming trip to Southwest Asia to support the enforcement of the "No-Fly Zones". Fr. Frank Cordaro and Richard Flamer were able to enter the barracks and deliver the message. Before being escorted from the property, officials promised them the message would be delivered to the top of the chain of command.

Address Service Requested

DMCW NEEDS

Prayers! Without them none of the rest matters (REALLY!).

\$\$! We were hit real hard this winter with outrageous heat bills. Our February utility bill for our three houses tripled over last year's. It came in at \$3,200. We were able to pay it with our usual Christmas donations, the same monies we normally use to pay the Spring bills and property taxes. Since paying February's utility bill we have had to beg from friends and supporters personally to pay our bills and get this issue of the *via pacis* out.

Renovation Needs! The high heat bills this winter are one more clear sign that we need to plug up the holes and get these houses in solid shape for the work we do. Among the things that need to be done is the outside of Dingman and Ligutti Houses need to be painted. At Lazarus House, roof work needs done, a major renovation project in the basement, and a deck on the back of house needs to be done. This is just a short list of the most obvious needs. There are plenty of other much smaller projects that need attention. (Poor Richard Flamer. When he returns from Chiapas, well have plenty of work for him to do.) Good carpenters, electricians and plumbers are always needed. We need folks who can take on a specific renovation project, whether they do it themselves or pay for it to be done.

Food and Stuff! The fat months between Thanksgiving and Christmas are over. Our food pantry is thinning out. We need canned and dry goods, as well as toiletries, especially: coffee, 100% fruit juice, breakfast cereal, canned fruit, vegetables, beans & meats, diapers, maxi pads and tampons, disposable razors and shaving cream, shampoo, toilet paper and dishcloths and hand soap.

Finally, we are always looking for individuals or work crews to help with maintenance and general cleaning. Spring is upon us. There is going to be a lot of yard and garden work. Plus people are always welcome to come and help us out with the hospitality. Just give a call or drop by.

Thanks for your continued support.

The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, 1310 - 7th St., Des Moines, IA 515-243-0765
Please send contributions to: PO Box 4551, Des Moines, IA 50306

